

Delaware Division of the

Delaware State Arts Council Meeting Minutes
June 19, 2013
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Buena Vista Conference Center, New Castle, DE

Attending: Council: Lise Monty (Chair), Lou Braithwaite, Richard Givens, Margaret Johnson, Gail Lear, Ruth Sokolowski, John Sarro, Catherine Walls, Mack Wathen, Lori Crawford, Carson Zullinger, Jon Newsom, Ralph Kuebler

Staff: Paul Weagraff, Susan Salkin, Terry Plummer, Sheila Ross, Kristin Pleasanton,

Public: Chris Darby, Tammy Kearney – Nanticoke River Arts Council

Absent: Elisabeth Poole, Carol Rothschild, Joann Browning, Dana Wise, Rebecca Moore

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

Minutes were approved from the March 20, 2013 Council meeting.

Chair's Report

Thanks to Ruth Sokolowski and Carson Zullinger for continuing to attend council meetings while Governor's office is processing new council nominations. Thanks to all council members who participated in panels. Really pleased with process for special review panel that Ms. Monty participated in. Thanks to the staff also. All should have received postcard for the 2013 Arts Summit, on October 28, 2013 at Dover Downs. Ms. Monty mentioned she likes the theme and logo and is looking forward to it.

Approval of Mack Wathen as the ArtCo Representative – Motion: Carson Zullinger, Second: John Sarro, unanimous approval.

Rick Givens has agreed to be vice-chair when Lise can't attend meetings.

Director's Report

Update on Council Nominations

Three positions still need to be filled: Ruth Sokolowski, Carson Zullinger, Elisa Poole. The Governor's Boards and Commissions office is now reviewing the Nominating Committee's recommendations for the Governor's consideration. Two members have been recommended for re-appointment: Carol Rothschild and Catherine Walls.

Partnership with DE Division of Libraries

On May 29, Delaware libraries kicked off the annual Summer Library Reading Program with First Lady Carla Markell making a special appearance to read to children at the Dover Public Library. Susan Salkin was invited to make remarks about the partnership between the state's Division of Libraries and Division of the Arts. This initiative is entering its 18th year of presenting performing arts programs at all 32 of the state's public libraries and the Dover Air Force Base Library in conjunction with Delaware's Summer Library Reading Program.

At the May 29 event, *Illstyle & Peace*, one of this year's performing groups, entertained a room full of 3rd graders and the First Lady with their hip-hop dance program, "Become Your Dreams."

Simple Gifts, a musical duo that features a diverse selection of folk music and songs from cultures around the world using familiar and not-so-familiar instruments, will also be performing at the state's libraries this summer. Both groups are starting their tour of the state's libraries this week.

NEA Funding

The Division of the Arts will receive a \$60,400 (8.7%) decrease from the NEA in FY14, down from \$698,500 to \$638,100. This is a result of sequestration and the re-institution of federal funding for Kansas and the Northern Marianas, both of which were re-approved for funding in FY14 after being zero-funded the previous year. The federal grant will be reviewed by the Office of Management Budget Clearinghouse for approval on Tuesday, June 25th.

New CLF for the Website

Division staff is working with the Government Information Center on the next iteration of the state's Common Look and Feel (CLF) for state websites. Over the next few months, we will be transitioning to the new website configuration which is designed to be user-friendly across browsers and mobile devices. We are also exploring migrating the hosting of our site to state servers, which will save us website hosting fees each year.

Amendment 1183

The Division received a call from Senator Carper's office regarding Amendment 1183 (Arts Require Timely Service (ARTS)) to the Immigration Reform Bill that would fix a shortcoming in current law that results in long and unpredictable wait times for artists seeking visas to perform in the United States. While current law requires the processing of applications within 14 days, lax enforcement often results in delays, in some cases as long as six months. This uncertainty has a devastating impact on performers and arts organizations throughout the country that need a reliable visa system in order to plan, promote, and present performances.

Arts Summit 2013 – October 28, 2013

Planning is moving forward for the 2013 Arts Summit. Save the Date cards have been mailed, workshop presenters and entertainment are getting lined up. The keynote speaker has been secured: Richard Blanco, Cuban-American poet who presented at President Obama's Second Inaugural.

For your calendar

September 14, 2013	IAF Reception – Biggs Museum, Dover; 11am – 1pm
September 18, 2013	Quarterly State Arts Council Meeting, Sussex County, TBD
October 28, 2013	Arts Summit 2013 – Dover Downs Hotel and Casino
December 18, 2013	Quarterly State Arts Council Meeting, New Castle County - TBD

Funding Allocation Considerations – Susan Salkin

Salkin reviewed the overall process: This year we had a slightly reduced panel process because it's the first year all of the GOS grants are in 2nd year of our 2-year panel review. The panels were for ASF, EDR, PS (which had a record number of applications) and special review panel for a handful of arts organizations that we felt needed a more intensive review. We had about 20 volunteer panelists including council members (thanks to all of you who helped out).

Weagraff reviewed funding principles as presented in Appendix I: Statement of Funding Principles.

Conflicts of interest in reviewing funding recommendations were confirmed:

- John Sarro – University of DE
- Rick Givens - Smyrna Opera House

- Ralph Kuebler –Center for the Creative Arts
- Carson Zullinger – Delaware Center for the Creative Arts
- Jon Newsom – Rehoboth Art League (RAL)
- Cathy Walls - Millsboro Art League and Mispillion Art League, Downtown Milford Inc.
- Lise Monty - Cancer Support Community DE

Project Support Grants Approval

Two applications didn't go before the panel: Nanticoke River Arts Council and Light up the Queen Foundation. They were either submitted in the wrong grant category or did not present a clear enough case for a panel to review meaningfully. Staff can follow up with both organizations for future guidance.

Weagraff presented a funding scenario based on available funds, panel rankings, size of request, and past funding history for repeat projects.

Motion and second to approve funding recommendation for all PS applications except for Cancer Support Community, Downtown Milford, and University of Delaware applications. Unanimous approval.

Motion and second to approve funding recommendation for Cancer Support Community of DE. All in favor. (Monty abstained).

Motion and second to approve funding recommendation for Downtown Milford, Inc. All in favor. (Walls abstained).

Motion and second to approve recommendation University of Delaware applications. All in favor. (Sarro abstained)

Arts Stabilization Fund Grants Approval

There were two organizations that applied and were excluded from review because what they were applying for didn't qualify under the eligibility criteria: Freeman Foundation and DE Center for the Contemporary Arts.

Weagraff presented a funding scenario based on available funds, panel rankings, size of request, and past funding history for repeat projects.

Motion and second to approve funding recommendation for all ASF applications except for Smyrna Opera House and Center for the Creative Arts. All in favor.

Motion and second to approve funding recommendation for Smyrna Opera House. All in favor. (Givens abstained)

Motion and second to approve funding recommendation for Center for the Creative Arts. All in favor. (Kuebler abstained)

Education Resource Grants Approval

There were two new applicants in the pool.

Weagraff presented a funding scenario based on available funds, panel rankings, size of request, and past funding history for repeat projects.

Motion and second to approve funding recommendation for all EDR applications except for DE Center for the Contemporary Arts and Rehoboth Art League. All in favor.

Motion and second to approve funding recommendation for DE Center for Contemporary Arts. All in favor. (Zullinger abstained)

Motion and second to approve funding recommendation for Rehoboth Art League. All in favor. (Newsom abstained)

Gallery Panel Review – Kristin Pleasanton

These are a mixture of fellowship winners and artists chosen from the gallery panel. Fellowship recipients are required to have a public exhibition during their fellowship year and they may choose the gallery as their public exhibition. Panel reviewed 39 artists and the top 4 are offered exhibits along with fellowship winners. Rack card being worked on now for exhibits for next year and will be out in a month or so.

- **The top four artists chosen are:**
 - Robin Phillips Pendleton – painting
 - Olga Nielson – bronze sculpture
 - Ryan Davis - painting
 - Linda Harris Reynolds - painting

General Operating Support Grants Approval and Special Review Panel

Weagraff reported that the Division is in an interim year where the organizations were asked to submit an interim report, not a full application. They were basically asked to present updated financial, organization and staff information and a brief report on their programming activities as it relates to what they said they were going to be doing in their original application, and to report to us any significant changes that they had experienced or anticipate experiencing in this year, such as changes in programming, staff or any significant changes in budget to alert us to that. They were reviewed internally by staff.

A few organizations were pulled out for review by a special panel for a variety of reasons. Two were pulled for full review due to significant issues that were recognized last year. Your Part Time Controller gave us a list of organizations with most serious financial issues and forwarded the most serious to the special panel. Others were pulled because of significant changes they're undergoing such as reduction in staffing and programming.

There was no ranking to be applied to the formula this year because they weren't reviewed by the panel and ranked that way. We instead applied the formula directly to their reported expenses and had no other factor involved in the funding other than the available funds from this grant category and the size of their organization.

The Council reviewed the panel comments for those organizations, which included: Children's Theatre, Inc.; Clear Space Theatre Company; Delaware Symphony; Delaware Theatre Company; ecarte dance theatre; Grand Opera House; Schwartz Center for the Arts; and University of Delaware REP program

Related discussion about arts organizations raised the following issues:

- Many organizations have scaled back in expenses, reflecting in many cases reductions in programming
- Many organizations seem to be struggling
- Basing funding on reported expenses could have a negative result of reducing grants to those organizations that are most successfully employing cost efficiencies. An alternative would be to base funding on reported revenues, thereby matching grant revenue to other contributed and earned revenue
- Many financial reports suggest that there is little significant development activity going on

- Is there a metric for measuring the effectiveness of organizations sustaining programming through in-kind or volunteer services, rather than just looking at dollars and cents?
- Many organizations have difficulty assessing the value of in-kind contributions (time or service)
- Perhaps the grant application could ask organizations to specifically address the measures they've taken to address their economic circumstances (decreases in contributed and earned revenue, etc.)
- Lengthy discussion ensued on the merits of having organizations address the public impact they have through their activities, rather than simply describe the activities. What outcomes do they anticipate and how are they achieving them?
- Given the range of organizations, in size and management structure, it's an ongoing challenge to find metrics that work for all in an equitable way

Following the discussion, general operating support funding recommendations were voted on as follows:

Motion and second to approve the funding recommendation for all GOS applications except for Center for the Creative Arts, DE Center for Contemporary Arts, Smyrna Opera House, Rehoboth Art League, Millsboro Art League, Mispillion Art League, and University of Delaware REP application. All in favor.

Motion and second to approve the funding recommendation for Center for the Creative Arts. All in favor. (Kuebler abstained)

Motion and second to approve the funding recommendation for DE Center for Contemporary Arts. All in favor. (Zullinger abstained)

Motion and second to approve the funding recommendation for Smyrna Opera House. All in favor. (Givens abstained)

Motion and second to approve the funding recommendation for Rehoboth Art League. All in favor. (Newsome abstained)

Motion and second to approve the funding recommendation for Millsboro Art League and Mispillion Art League. All in favor. (Walls abstained)

Motion and second to approve the funding recommendation for University of DE REP application. All in favor. (Sarro abstained)

Old Business - None

New Business

Weagraff announced that the Secretary of State has been working with the Joint Finance Committee and Office of Management & Budget on including an additional funding line to support arts organizations. It would be funded through a re-allocation of existing revenues. It would require no additional fees or taxes. If approved, it would only impact general operating support grants.

Public Comment

Chris Darby from Gallery 107 in Seaford: We are an all-volunteer gallery and everything has been done by the membership; that includes renovations, lighting, floors, hanging system, painting, re-doing electric. I have a letter from one of our parents to read to you... we have numerous classes for both adults and children in a variety of mediums. [reads letter from parent praising the organization] I invite all of you to come to the gallery and see what we're all about. Thank you.

Motion and second to adjourn meeting. All in favor.

Appendix I

Statement of Funding Principles

The Delaware Division of the Arts and the Delaware State Arts Council will be guided by the following statement of principles for funding arts programming and services in Delaware.

1. Public funding for the arts ensures that arts programming and services are available to all Delawareans.
 - a. The primary goal of arts funding is to serve arts audiences, participants, and students.
 - b. Arts and community-based organizations and schools serve as delivery mechanisms for programs and services.
 - c. Public funding for the arts serves as a complement to private/corporate funding and earned revenue.
2. Determinations to fund arts programming and services should be based on the merits of the application, using criteria set forth in respective grant categories.
3. Funding will be allocated to the most meritorious programs/projects.
 - a. Allocation of dollars to grant categories will be deferred until after the panels have met and applications have been ranked.
 - b. If a particular category has a large number of strong applicants, it should receive a higher proportion of the grant dollars for funding.
4. Decreases in funding do not necessarily indicate deteriorating quality of programming.
 - a. Many factors impact funding for any particular organization or project:
 - i. Number of applicants in the grant category
 - ii. Budget size (of the organization or project)
 - iii. Available funds (state and federal)
 - iv. Panel ranking of the application